

THE   
PRUSSIAN  
CADET 

*Translated by*  
W.D. LOWE

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## **THE PRUSSIAN CADET**



# THE PRUSSIAN CADET

*Letters from a Cadet to his Mother*

By PAUL VON SZCZEPAŃSKI

AND

## A STORY OF CADET LIFE

By ERNST VON WILDENBRUCH

TRANSLATED BY 106375

W. D. LOWE, Litt.D., M.A. *on*

LECTURER IN EDUCATION IN DURHAM UNIVERSITY; EDITOR OF *Cena Trimalchionis* OF PETRONIUS ARBITER, AND *Daphnis and Chloë* OF LONGUS



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## PREFACE

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W. D. LOWE.

THE CASTLE  
DURHAM  
1910.



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LETTERS FROM A CADET  
TO HIS MOTHER



# Letters from a Cadet to his Mother

## FIRST LETTER

To

The Honourable Lady Alberta von Godwin,  
Treptow-on-Rega,  
Further Pomerania.

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

August 20th, 1867.

MY DARLING MAMMA,

There are still a hundred and twenty days to the beginning of the Christmas holidays. I have made myself a calendar, and I cross a day out every evening; I have already crossed out to-day and the day we go home. But it's a very long time from the Midsummer holidays to the Christmas ones, and there really ought to be a fortnight's break in between; we all say so. I have been very homesick, darling mamma, for you and Lord and

old Jette and Lotte Hoene, and I am still. But I mustn't cry, because we mustn't cry under any circumstances; cadets must never cry. Last Tuesday, though, I did cry in bed at night when I thought the other boys were already asleep, and that no one would hear. But Bendling, a boy in the third form who sleeps in the bed next to me on the right, did hear me all the same, and pulled the counterpane off my bed and laughed and called out: 'Godwin's blubbing, the mollycoddle!' and I had to hold out my arm for him to punch the muscles. So I held out my arm, as we 'nippers' have to do what the third form boys tell us to.

But Sendrecki major who sleeps in the bed on my left said: 'Bendling, leave Godwin alone; as if you didn't blub when you came back after the long holidays!' Then he stroked my head and said: 'You mustn't cry, little Godwin; it won't do you any good. As soon as you get accustomed to it here you won't feel homesick any longer. I'm sure your father, who fell honourably on the battlefield, never cried in his whole life.'

Sendrecki major is not in the third form, he is still only in the fourth, as he didn't get his remove out of the fourth at Easter. But he is the strongest of us all in our company, the company champion. We don't know whether he is the strongest in the corps as he is a chum of Recklenburg in the third form, the company-champion of the first company, and hasn't wrestled with him; they say there isn't any need for us to know which of them is the stronger. As the boys in the third form now were once in the fourth with Sendrecki major, and are afraid of him, they have given him the third form privileges. I mean, mother dear, they are not allowed to bully him, though he may bully us new 'nippers'; but he doesn't, as he says it isn't any fun to him, and even if he did want to lick anyone it would have to be a boy in the third.

Sendrecki major has two other brothers in the cadet-corps: they are called Sendrecki minor and Sendrecki minimus. Sendrecki minor is in the fourth too, though he didn't fail at Easter; and he's very strong too, but not so

strong as Sendrecki major, as he's younger. So the third form have given him the third privileges as well. Sendrecki minimus is with me in the fifth, and we are at the same table in hall. Sendrecki minimus has a very good time of it in the cadet-corps, because his two brothers have the third form privileges, so the third don't bully him; they are allowed to, of course, but they daren't. I am very friendly with Sendrecki minimus, and so I have all the better time too in the cadet-corps. „ Altogether I like it very much in the cadet-corps, and you needn't think, darling mamma, that I don't like it because I cried. Sendrecki major says they all do when they come back to the corps after the first holidays, but don't ever after the second. „ Give my love to Lord and dear old Jette and Lotte Hoene.

With best love and kisses to you, darling mamma,

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,  
Royal Prussian Cadet, Second Company.

## SECOND LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

September, 8th 1867.

DEAREST MAMMA,

Thank you very much for the hamper which you sent me for my birthday, and for all your good wishes. But you oughtn't to say that I should go to Captain von Wecker and report it when the third form bully me. We call that sneaking, and a cadet must never sneak. The third form say it hardens you to be bullied, and it isn't as bad as you think. It was only yesterday that it was so disgusting, when Bendling made me swallow a piece of bacon. It was tied to a bit of thread ; and then when you have swallowed the bacon it is pulled up again. It doesn't hurt, dear, but it made me feel bad, as another boy had already swallowed it before me, and I was nearly sick. But just as I nearly

had to swallow it again Sendrecki major came into the room and said : 'Bendling, that is a piggish trick, and if you don't stop your piggish tricks I'll catch you one in the jaw.' Then Bendling said he wasn't bound to put up with that from Sendrecki major, and that Sendrecki major had no right to interfere with his privileges. But Sendrecki major only said : "Cowardly bully!" and caught him by the shoulder and shoved him away from our table ; and all the others laughed, even the sixth form, but Bendling got furious. But you mustn't write to Captain von Wecker that I had to swallow the bacon, or Sendrecki major would be mad with me, and I should certainly get a licking from the whole form : one gets that in the 'break' if one has done anything caddish, and all the boys in the same form hit you and say : 'You cad ! and 'cad' is the worst word you can say to anyone.

Thank you very much too, dearest mamma, for the half-crown which you sent me for my birthday. I had a party with it. We are allowed to on our birthdays, and we can ask six cadets. I should have liked to have asked

Sendrecki major and minor, as we sit at the same table, and their father was also an officer and is dead now, and they too come from Pomerania, though from round Stargard. But they both said I ought only to ask boys from the first division of the fifth form, and they had enough invitations if they were invited by the third and fourth forms. I think they were too proud. I shared the hamper you sent me with them and my other room companions, and only Bendling said it was a rotten hamper; but Sendrecki said that was a lie, and that you had put very nice things in.

Sendrecki minimus was at the party, and the cadets Diestel, Heinemann, von Grabow, von Unruh and Count Czertowski. The cadets Sendrecki are also called 'von,' but we cadets leave it out when we speak to each other, as we know without that which of us is noble and which is not. Count Czertowski is a real Pole from Poland, and when his mother brought him to the cadet-corps at Easter, she had quite a black dress and a gold chain round her waist with an eye-glass hanging to it. And when

Lieutenant von Grössnitz, who is our instructor and the best gymnast in Prussia, showed her our room, she laughed out quite loud with him ; so we nickname Count Czertowski the ' Laughing Jackass,' because he laughs as loud as his mother, and speaks just as funny German.

We had the party in the guard-room, where they always have the birthday parties if there is no cadet in confinement. The canteen-steward, Bartusch, got the chocolate ready and the cakes ; it tasted splendid, though Count Czertowski said champagne tasted still better. We counted up and made out that we should be lieutenants in six years time if we did not fail in our examinations, perhaps in five and a half years if we get into the Special form. Then we should be eighteen or perhaps seventeen ; only the cadets Diestel and Count Czertowski will be older, as Diestel was kept back in the fifth form, and Count Czertowski will soon be fifteen. He says he never learnt anything from the private tutors he had before he came to the Cadet-College ; but he said too that it made no difference, and that his mother had

only brought him here so that she needn't bother about him. If he doesn't like it better soon, he says he won't stay in the cadet-corps. We all hope there will be war again when we are lieutenants. There are still a hundred and three days to Christmas, mother dear. I am enjoying myself so, and my homesickness is much better now. Love to all, and make Lord give you his paw.

With kisses from your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

### THIRD LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

September 21st, 1867.

MY DARLING MAMMA,

I am rather sorry to hear from you that Lotte Hoene is engaged to Doctor Kunzelmann. I like Lotte very much, you know. But even in the Midsummer holidays she told me she could not afford to wait for me, as she is twenty-four already and did not want to be an old maid before she marries. So I am only sorry because she can't come so often to you when she is married, and then you will be so much alone, mamma dear; but I am not sorry any more that Lotte is engaged. Tell her that I send her my congratulations, and am, and always will be, her friend. As soon as I am lieutenant, dearest mamma, in five or six years, you must live with me, so

as not to be so much alone, that is if I don't get to a bad garrison where you wouldn't like to live. You can bring Lord and old Jette too.

You can give my toys away now ; in the Midsummer holidays I didn't play with most of them, and in the Christmas holidays I won't play with them at all. Cadets don't play with toys. There are only ninety days now till the Christmas holidays start. I should like to write to you every ten days, darling mamma, because then it is so easy to count ; but only if you let me, as you said that sixpence postage is a great deal, and so I must only write every fortnight. Just think, they call a sixpence a 'tanner' here. Last Sunday afternoon we were taken to the Parowe—it is a wood half a mile from Kulm. Lieutenant von Grössnitz was on duty that day and took us : we are always very glad when he is on duty on Sunday as he is always so jolly, and plays at robbers and soldiers with us when we are out. He was a cadet too, but it is a long while ago. We have to march going through the town, but outside we can walk together just as we

like, only we are not allowed to stay too far behind, the corporal on duty who goes last sees to that. I went with Sendrecki minimus.

We were allowed to separate off in the Parowe and do just what we liked ; we only had to notice when the 'assemble' was blown. Some of us played at robbers and soldiers, and some bathed in a pond : but it was only a clay pit full of rainwater, and they really oughtn't to have done it, as we are taken to the Vistula twice a week to bathe and learn swimming. The water was very dirty and I didn't want to bathe. I went with Sendrecki minimus through the wood and we found a wild pear-tree, so we climbed up it and brought some pears down. They were quite small and very sour but we ate them all the same. Sendrecki minimus tore a hole in his clothes, but it was where you wouldn't notice it, and he says it doesn't matter as he will sew it together himself. Then we sat down quite alone in the wood where we could hardly hear the other cadets, and Sendrecki minimus asked me whether we should swear 'blood-brotherhood.' I said 'yes,' and we took

a pocketknife and cut our hands, but only a very little ; then we sucked each other's blood and swallowed it, just like the Red Indians in America. And now Sendrecki minimus must help me when I am in need or danger ; and I must help Sendrecki minimus when he is in need or in danger, and I will, too, very gladly. And it doesn't last only just while we are in the Cadet-College, but afterwards as well, and we think it will be useful to us when there is war again.

Perhaps father would have been still alive if he had had a blood-brother who would have knocked the musket from the hand of the Austrian when he was at the battle of Königgrätz. Some cadets say, too, that they found earth you could eat in the Parowe, just as the Indians eat it on the Amazon in South America. Bendling, the boy in the third form, showed it to them, and 'the nippers' had to eat it. But Sendrecki major said it was ordinary clay, and he would knock these piggish tricks out of Bendling. Sendrecki major and Bendling don't speak to each other now, and

Bendling wants to get the third form to take their privileges away from Sendrecki major. But Sendrecki major asked three of them who had talked it over with Bendling whether they wanted to swallow their back teeth. And as he and Recklenburg are the champions of the companies, and the cadets say they are blood-brothers like Sendrecki minimus and me, I think they won't take his third form privileges away. I should like to give Lotte Hoene something for her wedding if you will let me take some money out of my savings-box. But ask her whether she and Doctor Kunzelmann can't get married at Christmas when I am at home. I am sure Lord only killed the fowl of Krüger, the joiner, by mistake, and you mustn't get rid of him for that. Give old Jette my love, darling mamma,

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet,

## FOURTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

October 1st, 1867.

DEAREST MOTHER,

I mustn't write mamma to you any longer as Sendrecki minimus told me that only small boys talk to their mothers like that, and if he still had a mother he would call her mother and not mamma. But I will only do it if you let me. The Sendreckis haven't got any mother or father, and they only go home for the Midsummer holidays: I mean to their guardian who is their uncle. But at Christmas they stay in the Cadet-College, as there are three of them and the journey costs too much. They are poor too; but Sendrecki major says it doesn't matter, and that his father had had the motto: 'Poor, but noble,' and so he has the motto too. And his father had written in his

will that his sons should become officers and not aim at marrying a rich wife, and they don't want to do that either. Only Sendrecki minimus says if a rich lady were very pretty, and he liked her very much, he would want to marry her all the same. Sendrecki minimus has taken the motto: 'Nec soli cedit:' it means, 'He challenges the sun:' he means himself by that. I have taken a motto for myself too: 'Impavide et constanter;' it means 'Fearless and faithful.' Sendrecki minimus has written in my album

A Dieu ton âme,  
Ton épée au roi,  
Ton coeur aux dames,  
L'honneur pour toi.

You understand that as it is in French, darling mamma; I think it is very fine. I asked Sendrecki minimus whether he would come home with me for Christmas, and I told him you would allow it; but he said it wouldn't do as the journey would cost a pound or more, and besides he said it would be all the same where one spent Christmas if one had no

mother. And Sendrecki major and minor say it will be quite good fun at Christmas time even in the cadet-corps, and that they get a Christmas tree and presents. Last Tuesday we had a great raid during the night. Mr. Winter, the clergyman, who is chaplain to the cadet-corps, and takes us in scripture and confirms us when we are fourteen, has a beautiful garden on the terraces where we have our gardens. I told you that I had sown your initials A. G. in my garden with cress, and that it has come up quite thick. Sendrecki minor drew the letters in a monogram for me in the ground with a crown at the top, as he is the best drawer in our company.

We are not allowed to go into the chaplain's garden, and there is a high hedge separating it off. Last Monday Mr. Winter told the upper and lower third, and upper and lower fourth, that the pears in his garden were nearly ripe and that he hoped the cadets wouldn't carry them off in the night as they had done in former years, and he needn't tell the fifth and sixth that as he did not think them capable of doing it yet.

And most of the third form, too, decided that they would leave his pears alone this year, but Sendrecki major said: 'Isn't there any go left in the company? You can bully nippers, but you haven't got the spirit for an honourable raid.' And he said too, 'Why does the stupid fellow remind us every year that his pears are ripe? as if we thought of the stupid things the whole year through'. And Sendrecki major decided to have a raid.

The whole of our room, No. Four, took part in it, except the senior, Corporal Haniel, as he would have been sacked if it had got out; and Bendling in the third form, as he wouldn't be commanded by Sendrecki major. But Corporal Haniel said that, of course, he wouldn't report it and Sendrecki major told Bendling that if he sneaked he would break every bone in his body. In the night, about two o'clock, Sendrecki major waked all sixteen of us in room Four, and we stole quite quietly out of the dormitory. The cadets in the other rooms all pretended that they were quite fast asleep, but they all knew of it, as those of us who were

going on the raid hadn't taken off our clothes at all, only our boots. Then we got out on to the corridor ; büt as the quarters of the second company are on the first floor and the door is shut at night, we had to scramble down the trellis-work of the vine.

Sendrecki major climbed down first and shewed the rest the way and helped us, but Sendrecki minimus was last ; and Sendrecki major wasn't noticing any longer, and Sendrecki minimus fell and cut his left hand and cried out because it hurt him. But Sendrecki major clenched his fist under his nose and said, ' Shut your jaw, or we shall be done for.' Then Sendrecki minimus became quite quiet, and we all listened to hear whether any one was coming ; and Sendrecki major said: ' To punish you, you shall keep watch here below the window, though Godwin really ought to as he is the youngest.' Then we went on again quite quietly, and a watch was posted every hundred yards. I was by the church, where Sendrecki minimus really should have been. If any one came we sentries were to

whistle, and then everyone was to bolt up the trellis-work and into the dormitory as quickly as he could. But no one did come ; only as we passed the chaplain's house the house-dog began to bark, and we stood still and held our breath ; then he stopped again, and we went on quietly once more.

The big boys then climbed over the wall on to the terrace, each with his knapsack ; soon they came back again with all the knapsacks quite full of pears. And Sendrecki minor said : ' This time we haven't left the parson a single one ; ' he meant the chaplain, mamma. Then we got up the trellis-work again, and it was quite easy, and we pulled up the knapsacks with a cord. We divided the pears in our room and put them away in our lockers, but we took some into the dormitory too ; they were all awake there and wanted to have some as well, so we gave them a share and ate some ourselves. And they all said that Sendrecki major was, after all, the smartest of the whole lot.

Next morning Sendrecki minimus smashed

a glass in the bathroom and made his hand all bloody again with the bits, and said he had cut himself, so--he was taken to the hospital and the deputy surgeon bound up his hand. But the chaplain noticed it at once next morning and reported it to the company commanders, and they ordered the instructors to inspect all the lockers. So Lieutenant von Grössnitz at the midday roll call announced in his room, No. Four, that he would review the lockers at half past four that afternoon. By half past four all the pears were eaten up, and the other rooms helped us to finish them. Lieutenant von Grössnitz looked into all the lockers but he didn't find anything, though they still smelled of pears inside, and he laughed and said: 'I knew I shouldn't find any pears in my room. When I was a cadet the chaplain always maintained then, too, that the cadets priggled his pears, but he never could prove it. Well, so far, he's still always had to go through the winter without any pears.'

I think Lieutenant von Grössnitz and

the chaplain don't like each other much, but I don't know why. The raid was splendid, mother dear, and Count Czertowski said he would stay in the cadet-corps if we only had such fun oftener. . Nothing ever got out about it either, and Sendrecki minimus' hand is all right again now. He was sick with me for two days because I was put at his post and he had to stay at mine, but I told him it wasn't my fault and we have made it up again. Good-bye darling mother, with thousands of kisses.

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## FIFTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

October 10th, 1867.

DARLING MOTHER,

You said it wasn't right to make a raid on Mr. Winter's garden, and if Sendrecki major wanted to make another I - was to tell him I would not join. I told Sendrecki major what you wrote, and that you thought father too wouldn't have liked to see me on the war-path. But Sendrecki major said : ' Perhaps not now, but he would have gone too when he was a cadet.' And I think so too, Sendrecki major said besides I ought not to tell you everything as, after all, mothers can't understand everything, and how things must go on in a cadet-corps. But I am sure he only said that because he hasn't got a mother ; and I would rather tell you everything, and I think you will

understand too if only I make it properly clear to you.

If you had learnt history you would certainly understand : we learn history and 'all about a Spartan boy who was a hero because he had stolen a fox and hid it in his clothes, and the fox bit the boy in the chest till he died, but he never made a sound so that people should not notice it. And the Spartans set up a monument to him, and we are taught about him in our history lessons. Now just think, darling mamma, if the trellis-work of the vine had broken, we should have broken our necks and been killed too ; it is just the same. And after all Sendrecki minimus did cut his hand badly, and he says he will be proud of the scar as long as he lives ; but when he said that, Sendrecki minor told him he could have been if he hadn't cried out. Then Sendrecki minimus got red, as he always does, at once ; but I said : ' After all Sendrecki minimus did stop crying at once.' Sendrecki major and minor don't know we are blood-brothers ; no one is allowed to know it. I have only told you, darling mother.

On Thursday we held the holy Vehmlic court, and now we aren't nippers any longer but we are old cadets; still the third form can bully us yet until we get into the third form ourselves, then we can bully too, but I don't know yet whether I shall. The court of the holy Vehm was held in our room, No. Four, and we all had to go out, only the third form stayed in and the boys in the fourth form who have had third form privileges given them; it wasn't only the boys in room Four, but all in the second company. We nippers had to stand in the corridor outside and wait, and then we were called in one by one. Sometimes two were called in together to make it go quicker. Some said it was very bad when they came out, but others said it wasn't at all bad, and they had laughed.

Then I was called in too; it was quite dark in the room but for a bluish light from a few soap dishes into which they had poured methylated spirits and then lighted it. The tables were all pushed away, and only one remained in the middle for the execution; but

high up on the lockers sat the chief judge of the holy Vehm and his two assessors, and the brothers of the holy Vehm stood in front of the lockers right up to the door, forming an avenue through which I had to go ; they all had white robes on going right over their heads, but they were the sheets which they had taken from the dormitory. As I came in at the door a Vehm-brother seized me by the arm and led me before the chief judge, and they all made a horrible noise. But my guide whispered hurriedly to me : ' You needn't be afraid, little Godwin, it's all only fun,' and I knew it was Sendrecki major who was leading me, and I wasn't afraid any more. When I got in front of the chief judge they all stopped making the noise, and he asked me questions : I didn't understand a good many of them. He spoke in a very deep voice, but all the same I knew it was the senior of our room, Corporal Haniel, who was chief judge. Then they condemned me to be tossed three times, to dance on my stomach without obstacles, to finding the key-hole, and to star-gazing.

The tossing came first: six Vehm-brothers took a blanket from the dormitory and held it out tight, and two more put me on it on my back; one of them was Sendrecki major, and he whispered: 'Hold your hands out in front of you, then it won't hurt you.' Then at the word of the chief judge they tossed me three times in the air, but I only reached the ceiling once, and as I had my hands out in front it didn't hurt me at all; really, it was rather nice.

Then came the stomach-dance; they put me on the table on my stomach, and four Vehm-brothers took me by the hands and feet and whirled me round and round on the table quite quickly; as I was getting giddy Sendrecki major called out: 'That'll do,' and they stopped. But if I had been condemned to a stomach-dance with obstacles they would have had to have given me a licking as well.

Then came finding the keyhole: they put me in front of a locker and blindfolded me, and I had to feel for the key-hole with my

finger; but a Vehm-brother put his head in between and opened his mouth, and when my finger was inside bit me. And as he bit very hard I almost cried out, but he let go again at once and spat and shouted: 'You little pig, Godwin, you poked me in the nose!'

But it wasn't true; and I noticed that it was the third form boy Bendling who had bitten my finger, and he gave me a box on the ears. Then Sendrecki major pushed him away and said: 'You have no right, Bendling, to increase the punishments which the chief judge has passed.' Bendling got furious and said: 'Of course, little Godwin is your protégé, Sendrecki major.' That is, mother dear, when a big cadet and a little one get on well together, then the little cadet is the protégé. But Sendrecki major only said: 'Scandal-monger!' and then he added: 'As the blood-brother Bendling has gone beyond his powers, and has on his own authority increased the sentence passed on the nipper, Godwin, I propose that we remit the nipper, Godwin, the sentence of star-gazing, and deprive the Vehm-

brother Bendling of authority to carry out sentences in the name of the holy Vehm.' And Sendrecki minor and all the chums of the Sendreckis, most of us, supported the motion and it was passed.

Then I was led before the chief judge again, and he told me I wasn't a 'nipper' but an old cadet, and Sendrecki major took me by the arm again and led me out of the room. I should have quite liked to have done the star-gazing too, as I was curious to see what it was like to see stars. But Sendrecki minimus had to do the star-gazing, as his brothers told him they could not protect him from the holy Vehm, and he described it to me. You get a coat-sleeve held in front of your face like a telescope, and are told you must look through it if you want to see stars. Then when you have looked through for a bit they pour a glass of cold water in at the top of the sleeve, and you get a fright and are quite drenched. Really, it is stupid; still, I am glad all the same I'm not a nipper any longer.

I am very sorry, darling mamma, that you

had to give Lord away as you haven't got enough for him to eat any longer now that you cook only for yourself and old Jette. But as you have given him to Dr. Kunzelmann, and as he is marrying Lotte Hoene soon, I am not very sorry any longer as Lord will have a good time of it. Tell Dr. Kunzelmann and Lotte Hoene they must always take Lord with them when they go a walk ; he won't run away, as he knows Lotte Hoene and likes her very much.

With love and kisses, darling mother,

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## SIXTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

October 19th, 1867.

DEAREST MOTHER,

I am writing to you to-day, a day earlier than usual, as the officer in command of the Cadet-College, Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff, ordered me to write to you, and Lieutenant von Grössnitz has let me off walking on the terrace in the play-hour so that I shall have time to write to you. The news that I have to tell you is splendid, and I wished you had been there. And Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff ordered me to write to you and give you his kindest regards, and say that he was proud to have had the honour of knowing father personally. I am writing to you word for word what he said, dear mamma.

Yesterday was the 18th of October, the anni-

versary of the three days' battle at Leipzig and the birthday of his Royal Highness Frederick William, the crown prince ; and we had a parade, and the Lieutenant-colonel made us a speech and told us of the People's Battle at Leipzig. Then we were marched past him in review order and on into the dining-hall. There are hanging up there two memorial tablets with the names of the officers inscribed on them who fell in 1806, and in the Liberation Wars, and were cadets from Kulm. But we found hanging there a third memorial tablet—a new one—and all three had laurel leaves, and the third one was engraved with the names of the officers who fell in the war against Austria and were cadets from Kulm.

We had to go to our places and wait till the orderly corporal for the day should say grace before the orderly lieutenant for the day said, 'Take your seats ;' and I thought after dinner I would ask leave to go into the dining-room again and see if father's name was on the third tablet. While we were still waiting Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff came into

the dining-room with all the other officers behind him, and the lieutenant on duty called out 'Attention,' and made his report to the Lieutenant-colonel. The Lieutenant-colonel looked in front of him for a moment and then called out : ' Cadet von Godwin.' I got a great fright but I called out loud, 'Here,' and Sendrecki major who sits next me at table gave me a nudge with his elbow in spite of the command, 'Attention.' So I pulled myself together and marched smartly up to the Lieutenant-colonel, and halted smartly three paces in front of him and looked smartly at him. I was still very much frightened as I didn't know why the Lieutenant-colonel had called me up ; but our instructor, Lieutenant von Grössnitz, who was standing behind the Lieutenant-colonel, nodded to me and I thought : ' It can't be anything very bad '. The Lieutenant-colonel looked at me kindly and said : ' About turn, my boy,' and he took me by the shoulder and turned me about so that I stood beside him. I felt very confused as I saw all the cadets looking at me, and the orderly corporal standing just

opposite ready to say grace. But he wasn't allowed to say it just yet ; it was quite still in the hall, then Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff said in a loud voice : ' Cadets, to-day, on the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig, you see for the first time in your hall a third memorial tablet. On it are engraved the names of the officers who have been trained in this College and have died the death of heroes for their King and country in the war against Austria. They should be an example to you how to live and die, if God in his grace destines you for a soldier's death. And if such a death is granted you, one of the heroes, whose name is engraved there, has given you a pattern how to die. He was Lieutenant-colonel von Godwin, and his only son, Gerard von Godwin, stands here beside me to-day. Lieutenant-colonel von Godwin lay severely wounded on the heights of Chlum, and was found in that condition by the ambulance. They were preparing to carry him to the dressing station when King William rode up with his staff over the heights of Chlum : as Lieutenant-colonel von Godwin saw his King coming,

though mortally wounded, he pushed the ambulance-men back and raised himself up and shouted in a loud voice: 'His Majesty the King, hip, hip, hurrah!' and then fell back dead into the arms of the bearers. That was the death of a hero, and may God grant us all a like death, for our first thought in life and our last thought in death must be the King; and it is that, cadets, that we mean to promise when we cry: His Majesty the King, hip, hip, hurrah!'

I couldn't join in the cheers, mother darling, though I promised it all the same. When Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff first mentioned father's name a lump stuck in my throat so that I thought I couldn't help crying, but when the Lieutenant-colonel noticed it he put his hand on my shoulder and pressed it quite gently, and continued speaking steadily and slowly and in a loud voice, and kept his hand resting on my shoulder; so I didn't want to cry, and I stood smartly at attention and looked straight in front of me, as everything seemed to grow dark before my eyes. When

the hurrahing was over the Lieutenant-colonel said, 'Let us say grace,' and the orderly corporal on duty said grace; then the Lieutenant-colonel said: 'Sit down,' and then he gave me the message which I told you at the beginning of the letter. But when I was just going to sit down too, everything grew quite dark again round me so that I tried to go to the side of the room where the first company sits, and Lieutenant von Grössnitz took me by the arm and led me to my seat. There was roast pork and baked fruit for dinner, but I couldn't eat much, and all the cadets at my table talked only of father during dinner; and Sendrecki minimus said: 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori:' that means it is sweet and honourable to die for one's country, mother dear. Only Bendling said nothing. Dearest, darling mamma, how proud I am of father, and of being a Prussian cadet.

With kisses from your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## SEVENTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

October 30th, 1867.

DARLING MOTHER,

Lieutenant-colonel von Witzendorff will be pleased, I'm sure that you wrote to him and thanked him, but he hasn't told me whether he was pleased; only, as I was sitting with Sendrecki minimus in the court during the interval, the Lieutenant-colonel passed by and we sprang up and stood smartly to attention, then he stopped and said: 'Everything going on all right, Cadet von Godwin?' and I said, 'Very well, thank you, sir.' And the Lieutenant-colonel said to Sendrecki minimus: 'What is your name, cadet?' And Sendrecki minimus replied: 'Cadet von Sendrecki minimus, sir.' Then the Lieutenant-colonel said, 'Ah, so you too are the son of a

deserving officer. That is right, stick close to each other.' Then he saluted and passed on, and we were both delighted.

The day before yesterday, Sunday, the page-boy of Captain von Wecker came in his blue livery during the lesson to our room, No. Four, and stood to attention in front of the senior, Corporal Haniel, and said : ' Captain and Mrs. von Wecker request the favour of the company of Cadets von Sendrecki minimus and von Godwin at dinner at six o'clock to-morrow.' Corporal Haniel said : ' Cadets von Sendrecki minimus and von Godwin are very grateful for the honour, and will do themselves the honour to accept ;' then the page-boy went on to the other rooms too, and invited some other cadets as well. As he left the room the third form boy Bendling said : ' So Captain von Wecker is going to feed the poor again.' Then Sendrecki major shied his logarithm-book at Bendling's head, and Corporal Haniel only said, ' No loud talking during lessons, I forbid that, Bendling ;' and he said nothing to Sendrecki major.

On Sunday afternoon Sendrecki minimus and

I were let off the walk as we had been invited to the Captain's, and we were allowed to put on our spare uniforms and badges, and our own boots and gloves. And Sendrecki minimus made a parting at the back of his head with a stick of pomade, and he wanted to make one for me too, but it didn't succeed as my hair was too short and stood on end on the top of my head. Then Sendrecki minimus said it wouldn't do, and I need only take care not to turn my back to Mrs. von Wecker, and then it would be all right just as it was.

At six o'clock all eight of us cadets who had been invited went across to the Captain's. It was very grand there: quite a soft carpet lay on the floor of the room, and the chairs were quite soft too, and the chandelier was lighted. Mrs. von Wecker shook hands with me and said, 'How is your dear mother, Mr. von Godwin?' And I felt quite comfortable at once, but I couldn't help looking at her as she is very pretty and very nice and kind. Then the page-boy opened the folding doors and announced, 'Dinner is served,' just as our page-boy used

to do at home when we still had one. Sendrecki minimus had just told Mr. von Wecker that as soon as he was a lieutenant he would get married at once ; then Captain von Wecker laughed and said : ‘ Sendrecki, you seem to be an amusing gentleman, so please take my wife in to dinner.’ So Sendrecki minimus stood up and made Mrs. von Wecker a deep bow and offered her his arm, but the Captain’s wife could only lay her hand upon his arm as he is not much bigger than me.

They went into the dining-room and so did we, and the Captain came last of all ; and there was roast veal and potatoes with gravy and apple sauce, and then sweets as well, and if anyone said ‘ No, thank you,’ the Captain said : ‘ Pass your plate along,’ and helped him himself. They had silver knives and forks—Sendrecki minimus told me they were silver, and we think they are very rich. When we had all had enough we left the table, and the Captain went with us to the theatre but Mrs. von Wecker didn’t come. The theatre was in the hall of the Hotel de Rome, and the piece was a -

musical comedy with singing and dancing. At the end, when the piece was over, the best thing came—a real Japanese man and woman. The Japanese woman put herself in front of a wooden wall and stretched out her arms sideways, and the man threw knives at her so that she was not hit, but the knives stuck fast in the woodwork all round her. Then when he had finished throwing all the knives they took each other by the hand and laughed and made us a deep bow.

Sendrecki minimus kept on calling 'Bravo,' as he said that is what one calls in the theatre if one is pleased. I don't know where he gets to know all about it from, as it is only the first time that he has been in a theatre. Then we went home again and thanked Captain von Wecker, and went to the dormitory where all the other cadets were fast asleep already, as we had late leave till eleven. I was very tired and went to sleep at once. But it was splendid, mother dear, and now I know what it is like in a theatre. I forgot to tell you that Captain von Wecker gave us each a

glass of claret-cup during the interval in the theatre.

It is a pity if Lotte Hoene means to be married on November 24th as I can't be there then. But if Dr. Kunzelmann won't wait any longer of course she can't help it. I should like to give Lotte Hoene a new collar for Lord for her wedding. Dr. Kunzelmann's name ought to be on it, so that Lord should know whom he belongs to, and people should send him back if he gets lost. But I don't think he will get lost. Do you think, darling mother, I have enough in my money box, and will you see about it for me and give it to Lotte Hoene? But you must tell her that the present is for her and not for Dr. Kunzelmann.

With love and kisses

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN.

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## EIGHTH LETTER.

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

November 9th, 1867.

DARLING MOTHER,

Thank you very much for saying you will see about Lord's collar for Lotte Hoene, and that you think it is a good idea. It doesn't matter if you have to take all the money out of my box, all the same I should be glad if there was a little left ; and you do think it won't cost so much, don't you ?

Just think, mamma ; yesterday, in the second break, I pulled myself up three times on the horizontal bar, but the third time not quite up. But Sendrecki major said that would soon come if I would only pull myself up every break. Sendrecki major can pull himself up twenty-two times, but I think he can really pull himself up as often as he likes ; and he does it with one

arm too. You can't imagine how strong he is, mamma, and he has given Bendling a most awful licking ; but we all say that Bendling deserved it, and he was properly tried and condemned too, and Sendrecki major was to thrash him. It was dreadful all the same, and I think, mother dear, I oughtn't really to tell you at all as we all promised in room No. Four not to talk about it.

The day before yesterday it was cold and rather rainy, and Sendrecki minimus was on the sick list because his tonsils were swollen, and as he was not allowed out in the court during play time, and as I always go about with him when we are out in the court, it was very slow and I was cold. So I got near the door and rushed up to our room as soon as it struck four, and I thought I should be the first in room Four except for Sendrecki minimus who was not allowed out in the court, but he had just gone out and wasn't in the room as I came in ; but the third form boy Bendling, who had taken French leave from the court, was in the room and stood at his table, and as I came in he gave a start and pushed something into

his table-drawer quickly and shut it, and I noticed that the locker of the fourth form boy Niendorf was standing wide open as I came in, and we are not allowed to leave our lockers open when we go out of the room. As I looked at the locker Bendling noticed it, and he pushed the door to with his foot and said: 'That calf-head, Niendorf, has left his locker open again; if Corporal Haniel sees it he'll get reported for punishment'. Then the other cadets came in, and Niendorf too.

Cadet Niendorf comes from Königsberg, and had had a hamper with some Königsberg marzipans sent him from home a few days before, and he had given us all some of it. Niendorf went to his locker to open it, suddenly he shouted out: 'Some one has broken my locker open and taken out my big heart of marzipan which I had been keeping.' Corporal Haniel said: 'You must have forgotten to shut your locker, Niendorf, and some one has been playing a trick on you. The heart 'll turn up all right soon; we don't steal in No. Four.' I wondered at once whether Bendling had taken it out and

hidden it in his table-drawer just before, but I daren't sneak, and Niendorf said : ' I am quite positive I shut my locker, and you can see by the lock that the bolt has been pushed back with a knife.' The corporal and the rest of us looked and saw it was so : only Bendling remained standing with his back to his table-drawer. Just then Sendrecki minimus came back into the room from being out. Bendling looked at him first and said : ' Sendrecki minimus has been here quite alone, of course, so one can quite well imagine who it was.'

As Sendrecki minimus heard his name, and every one was looking at him, he got quite red, just as he always does, and stopped. Then Sendrecki major went up to his brother and said : ' Sendrecki minimus, where have you got the almond heart?' But Sendrecki minimus got redder and redder and only stammered : ' W-w-where—' and of course everyone thought he had taken it as he was so confused. Sendrecki minor remained sitting on the table where he was, and only stared at Sendrecki minimus ; but Sendrecki major suddenly got as white as a

sheet, and seized his brother by the throat with his left hand and raised his right, clenching his fists and shouting : ' So you have stolen the almond heart, you— ! '

We all thought he would kill him, and we all stayed quite still in the room. Then I was so terrified, mamma, I caught Sendrecki major by the arm and cried : ' Don't do anything to your brother, Sendrecki major, Bendling broke the locker open,' though I didn't really know for certain whether it was Bendling. Then Sendrecki major dropped his fist, but still kept tight hold of his brother with his left hand, and Sendrecki minimus had got quite blue in the face. Sendrecki major looked at me and said : ' Is what you say true, Godwin ? ' and I said. ' I give you my sacred word of honour that your brother did not break the locker open, and I think Bendling has the almond heart in his table-drawer.' Then Sendrecki major let go of his brother and only said to him : ' Why can't you open your jaw when your life is at stake ? '

And Sendrecki minimus went to his place at our table, where Sendrecki minor had been

sitting, and he sat down in his chair and put his head on his arms and cried. But no one bothered about him, as we were all curious to see what Sendrecki major and Bendling would do. Bendling remained standing at his table-drawer but got quite green, and when Sendrecki major told him to open the drawer he said : ' I don't have to show you my drawer.' Then Sendrecki major seized him by the shoulder and hurled him against the locker with a crash, and he opened the drawer and said : ' Corporal Haniel, here is the almond heart.' Then I was glad, mamma, that my idea had been right.

Corporal Haniel said : ' I shall have to report you to the Captain, Bendling, and you will be sacked ; but perhaps the cadets think that we can settle the matter in the room so that your parents shan't be disgraced by you. If you will let Sendrecki major give you ten strokes of your own accord I won't report you.' But Bendling was afraid, and said he would rather be reported. Then Corporal Haniel got angry and said : ' You funk, do you expect I shall let the disgrace that we have a thief in room Four

come to light? As you won't take ten of your own accord Sendrecki major shall give you twenty, ten for stealing and ten for throwing suspicion on his brother. Are you satisfied with the punishment, Sendrecki major?'

Sendrecki major said: 'If I thrash him, ten will be enough, Corporal Haniel.' And he went off to fetch his cane, but Bendling cried out: 'Didn't you all steal the pears? I'll report it to the Captain if you cane me.' Then Corporal Haniel said: 'You know that is quite a different thing, Bendling: Mr. Winter is not a cadet, and his pears weren't in a closed locker. But if you do mean to sneak, I will gladly let it cost me my corporal's stripes.' And Sendrecki minor got up from the table and went up to Bendling and said: 'Now, take off your coat, Bendling; you are quite wrong, my fine fellow, if you imagine you can slander a Sendrecki.'

Bendling didn't want to take his coat off, but Sendrecki minor tore it off his back, and the rest of the third and fourth form boys helped him. Then they put him on a table

and held him fast by his arms and legs, and Bendling shouted and begged for mercy, though Sendrecki major hadn't touched him at all yet. Sendrecki major noticed his cane was split, so he said : ' My cane has lost its spring, please lend me yours, Godwin,' and I ran quickly to my locker and fetched my cane. Corporal Haniel counted quite slowly : ' One, two, three, four,' and Sendrecki major laid it on each time. He laid it on frightfully, mamma, and always on the same spot, and Bendling roared and howled he would never do it again, but they didn't let him go. After the eighth stroke Sendrecki major threw his cane down and said : ' I can't go on, let the fellow go.' But they didn't let him go yet, and Corporal Haniel asked Sendrecki minor whether he wanted to give the last two strokes, but he replied : ' When Sendrecki major has given a thrashing there is no need for any one else to give another licking.' So they let Bendling go, and put him on his chair, but he didn't stop there but limped out of the room, and some of them went after him to see whether he would

go and report it to the Captain, but he only went to the dormitory and had his howl out.

All of us in the room took our seats, and Corporal Haniel said : 'No more talking now, it is work time.' Then Sendrecki minimus raised his head from his arms and didn't cry any more. Sendrecki major whispered to him : 'Thank Godwin that you are still alive, my boy.' And Sendrecki minor said : 'When you ought to hold your jaw, my young Spartan, you cry, and when you ought to open your jaw you're tongue-tied.' Then all four of us looked at each other and laughed, and Sendrecki minimus had to laugh too, and he said : 'I only cried for rage.' Then Corporal Haniel said : 'Silence.' I am so glad, mother darling, that I sit with the three Sendreckis at table. If you had only seen Sendrecki major as he slogged Bendling ! He looked like Achilles as he dragged Hector's body round the walls of Troy in a rage. It is splendid after all to be a cadet,

With love and kisses

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## NINTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

November 19th, 1867.

DARLING MOTHER,

We have already nearly enough ice for skating, and I know now what I want for Christmas. I should like a pair of skates, as in the winter we are allowed to go skating. But they should be English ones, without grooves under the steel part, as Sendrecki major and minor have English ones, and they say you skate easier and can cut figures only with English ones. If they are very dear you needn't buy straps with them, as I should get some string, and Sendrecki major says it does quite well with string if only the screw is in firm. But if you haven't any money over, as there is still twenty-five shillings which you have to send me for the journey, you needn't

give me the skates or any present at all. I am looking forward to Christmas all the same, even if you give me nothing. There are only thirty days more nōw, darling mamma. And old Jette needn't cook only my favourite dishes any more when I am at home ; I haven't got any favourite dishes any longer, I like everything that old Jette cooks. But you must write and tell me whether I may still call Lotte Hoene Lotte when I come home at Christmas and she is Dr. Kunzelmann's wife. I should like to, but I don't know whether Dr. Kunzelmann would be annoyed if I called his wife by her Christian name. Of course you will know, but you mustn't ask him about it.

There has been a big inquiry, dearest mother, because Count Czertowski has run away. They say he had a sweetheart, black-haired Ida, the gardener's daughter, who lives on the terrace. Mr. Winter saw them together and reported them, and Count Czertowski was put under arrest until the inquiry. But the next morning the window was found broken, and the guardroom was

empty, and on the table lay a piece of paper with 'Adieu a St. Jamais' written on it in blue pencil, as Count Czertowski speaks French better than German: it means 'Good-bye for ever.' Then they cross-questioned black-haired Ida, and she said she had gone walks with other cadets as well, but only with third form boys, and she gave their names; and now all of them are being examined too, and they say they will be degraded to the lowest conduct-class; that is a very bad lookout, for they are not allowed out on furlough any more, and it lasts at least six months before they can be moved back into the third conduct-class. Some cadets said black-haired Ida was Sendrecki major's sweetheart too, and that she had given his name as well. But when he heard that he said: 'My name? I know her better than that, she would rather bite her tongue off.' So I don't think, mother dear, that she was his sweetheart as well."

The gardener has had to send his daughter away, and she mayn't come home any more; and some of them say she has gone to Thorn.

and become a barmaid. We don't know where Count Czertowski has gone. The canteen-steward, Bartusch, is supposed to have helped him and lent him money, as Count Czertowski is very rich and he thinks he will get it back again; but only the cadets know it, and the officers mustn't know, or the canteen-steward, Bartusch, would be punished. Corporal Haniel asked Lieutenant von Grössnitz whether Count Czertowski would be likely to come back again, but Lieutenant von Grössnitz said 'No' yesterday, and he said: 'His mother will have been pleased with the whole affair.' So we suppose Count Czertowski is with his mother again. But why did she bring him here if now she is pleased to have him back again with her?

After a dinner party Lieutenant von Grössnitz wrestled with our chaplain, Mr. Martelius, in the gymnasium, as Mr. Martelius, who takes morning prayers and also preaches for Mr. Winter when Mr. Winter is ill, said at the dinner-party he was just as strong as Lieutenant von Grössnitz. We knew they meant

to wrestle, as an orderly who had heard them talking about it at dinner told us. They went over from the officers' mess to the gymnasium exactly in our play hour, and some other officers and the deputy-surgeon went with them, and they were all very red in the face and lively. But we daren't go into the gymnasium with them, so we stood at the window outside and looked in. They put down a mattress, and Lieutenant von Grössnitz and the chaplain, Mr. Martelius, wrestled on it.

Mr. Martelius is very strong too, and half a head taller than Lieutenant von Grössnitz but all the same we all knew that Lieutenant von Grössnitz would win. They wrestled for quite a while, and Mr. Martelius resisted very hard; but at last he was thrown, and remained lying there, and the deputy-surgeon sprang up to him and they took off his right boot. Then Lieutenant von Grössnitz came out of the gymnasium, and Sendrecki major called out: 'Three cheers for Lieutenant von Grössnitz! Hip, hip, hurrah!' And we all shouted 'Hurrah!' and we thought he would be

pleased, but he beckoned to us and said: 'Be quiet, boys.' Lieutenant von Grössnitz is the only officer we don't mind calling us 'Boys.' 'Be quiet, boys,' he said, 'it may turn out a bad business; poor Martelius has broken his leg. Sendrecki major, run over to the hospital sharp, and tell the two hospital orderlies to come over at once with the stretcher.' Then Sendrecki major ran off quickly, and Lieutenant von Grössnitz went back into the gymnasium.

We couldn't wait till Mr. Martelius was taken over to the hospital as our lessons began. But later on Lieutenant von Grössnitz came over to our room from his, as there is a door communicating between them, and he wasn't at all as lively as usual. Then Corporal Haniel said: 'Allow me, sir, to ask whether it is a very bad business with Mr. Martelius,' and Lieutenant von Grössnitz said: 'I am very sorry, the doctor thinks he may be lame for life. So you see, boys, the result of doing such silly things; you take a warning from me.' Then Sendrecki minimus said cheekily: 'He doesn't use his leg to preach with, sir,' but as soon as he said

it he turned awfully red. Lieutenant von Grössnitz just gave only a very little smile, and went back quietly to his room. And we were all frightfully sorry for Lieutenant von Grössnitz, he is so awfully decent to us. In the door between our room and his there's a small glass window with a sliding shutter behind it, which he can push back while he's in his room, and then look through without our noticing it. But when he came to Kulm as instructor he had the shutter nailed up so that he couldn't push it along or look through it any more, and he said: 'I was ordered here as an instructor, not as a spy.'

So we would all like to be lieutenants in his company if we get war again, and he is quite sure to be made general some day. Corporal Haniel says, too, he doesn't know what harm may be done to his career because the chaplain, Mr. Martelius, got his foot broken during the wrestling, as after all Mr. Martelius was the challenger. And we don't know for certain yet whether Mr. Martelius' leg will always remain stiff, and we are all hoping. None of

us speak to Bendling, the third form boy, as he is still in Coventry, so no one is allowed to speak to him. You must get quite well again for Lotte Hoëne's wedding, darling mamma, so that you can write and describe it all to me.

With best love and kisses

From your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## TENTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

November 29th, 1867.

DEAREST MOTHER,

I am so glad as Lotte Hoene, or rather her name's now Mrs. Kunzelmann, has already written to tell me that she was so pleased with the new collar which I gave Lord for her wedding-present. She told me too that Lord was very proud when he had his new collar on, and that she believed he knew it came from me. If she has told him that it came from me, he knows it for certain, as Lord understands everything that is said to him. He will be pleased too when I come home at Christmas, darling mamma; if you see him tell him there are only twenty days more now, that's less than three weeks. I have now divided the days in my calendar into two parts, so now I always cross out twice a day :

the first half at twelve and the second half in the evening; then you think the time goes quicker, but it doesn't really. When I think there are still twenty days I think it is a very long time after all; only, when I think it was once a hundred and thirty one days, and now it is only twenty, I think the time has gone very quickly all the same.

Lotte Hoene has sent me a big hamper too, with some cake from her wedding, and we all liked it very much. She wrote saying the wedding was splendid, but they were very sorry that you weren't quite well yet and so would not come to their wedding. What is the matter with you, dearest mamma? If you had only a cold you would have gone to Lotte Hoene's wedding all the same: send for Dr. Kunzelmann to come every day and tell you what you must do. If Dr. Kunzelmann can't find out by himself, then you must get Mr. Behr, the consulting doctor, to come as well. But you will be quite well again, darling mamma, when I get back for Christmas. You are glad I am coming, aren't you?

Bendling has had a hamper sent him from home too, and we all think that he wrote home for them to send him one. It was a very big one, and there was a 'smoked goose and sausages and butter and lots more besides in it. As Bendling opened the hamper Lieutenant von Grössnitz said: 'That is a regular butcher's shop, Bendling. Write home and say that you get plenty to eat here, and that in the future I forbid you to have food sent you by the hundredweight.' But even before the hamper came Bendling begged Corporal Haniel to speak to room No. Four to see whether they would let him out of Coventry again, and he wanted to beg Niendorf's and Sendrecki minimus' pardon.

Sendrecki major said: 'He needn't ask my brother's pardon, he has had his thrashing for that; but if you want to let him out of Coventry I have no objection.' So we put it to the vote and then let him out, but all the same most of us only talk very little to him, and only when he has asked us something.

Then the hamper came, and Bendling said we must all share it, and we might take what we liked. He came specially to our table, and asked Sendrecki major specially. But Sendrecki major said: 'Thank you, Bendling, but I am not hungry;' and then Sendrecki minor said: "No, thank you, Bendling." Sendrecki minimus opened his eyes wide and said nothing at first; I am sure he would have liked to have had something. Then Sendrecki minor trod heavily on his foot and said: 'Can't you open your jaw again at the proper time, my young Spartan?' Sendrecki minimus got red and said: 'No, thank you;' and then I too, like Sendrecki major said: 'No, thank you, Bendling, I am not hungry.' Bendling looked angrily at me but I don't care a jot for him, and a lot of others as well in room Four said: 'No, thank you,' and didn't take anything, but some did share in his hamper; I think they oughtn't to have done it, as, after all, he only got it sent to curry favour with us again. Corporal Haniel as well only took a sausage roll.

The sixth form boy, Brugeleben, got a licking

from the whole form, mother dear, but he doesn't belong to our company, and he can be very glad that he got off with that and that they didn't report him for being too cheeky. They only didn't report him because they said he was so stupid that he didn't know how cheeky he'd been. He found a dead mouse in the court and took it into school and tied a piece of string to it, and then as he stood before the blackboard with First Lieutenant von Balfinger, the geography master of the sixth form, in front of him, he tied the dead mouse by the string to one of the buttons on his coat tails. Lieutenant von Balfinger didn't notice it, and went into the master's room with the mouse hanging on. We always laugh at Lieutenant von Balfinger as he is so funny, and he is detailed for duty only in the cadet-corps as he can't be on the active service list any longer; but he isn't an instructor, he's only a master.

When Lieutenant von Balfinger came into the master's room, the top master, Mr. Breyer, saw the dead mouse and said: "Whatever have you got there?" Then Lieutenant von Balfinger

saw the mouse too, and he shouted out that they hadn't any respect for him even in the sixth form any longer, and that Mr. Breyer, the top master, hadn't any respect for him any more and he would soon drive some respect into him, and he drew his sword and made for Mr. Breyer. But the other officers who were in the master's room rushed up and didn't allow it, and at first they tied his hands, and then they put him into a strait waistcoat so that he couldn't move at all. But Lieutenant von Balfinger didn't want to do anything to Mr. Breyer any longer, but he only kept on crying he must take his own life as he was disgraced. So they put him in a carriage and drove him to the lunatic asylum in Schwetz, and Captain von Wecker sat next him, with Lieutenant von Grössnitz and the deputy-surgeon, Mr. Krüger, opposite. Lieutenant von Balfinger is married, and they say his wife cried a great deal; but Mrs. von Wecker went over at once to her and stayed the whole afternoon with her. Then there was an inquiry about who had tied the dead mouse on to his coat button.

The sixth form discussed whether they should report Brugeleben, but they said they would not report him as Brugeleben said he had only played a joke and never thought Lieutenant von Balfinger would be so furious. But the sixth form said he had dared to play the joke on Lieutenant von Balfinger, as the Lieutenant was always so funny, but he ought to have had more respect for the King's uniform. So they condemned him to be given a thrashing by the form, but they only licked him and didn't say 'you cad' to him, and as they did not report him the whole of the sixth have got one hour's extra work a day till Christmas. They say Lieutenant von Balfinger is better already, and that he won't stay in the asylum but will take his discharge. It is very cold indeed, darling mamma, and I would like to ask you to send me a travelling-rug to keep me from getting so frozen on my journey home at Christmas-time. Best love and kisses from your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet,

## ELEVENTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

December 9th, 1867.

DARLING MAMMA,

Why haven't you written, and why did Lotte Hoene, I mean Mrs. Kunzelmann, write and say you weren't quite well again yet, and so had asked her to write to me? Are you so ill, dearest mamma, that you can't write yourself? But still Lotte Hoene wrote to me that her husband had told her it was not so bad, and that I need not be anxious; but I am anxious all the same, darling mamma; be quite well again by the time I come home at Christmas. Old Jette must cook you something really nice; and then she needn't cook anything special for me when I am home, I eat anything now. It's only rice that I can't eat yet, and we only get that on Thursdays.

It has suddenly turned very cold, dear mamma, and thank you very much for sending me the travelling rug ; I shan't freeze on the journey now, even if it stays so cold till Christmas. There are only ten days now, and now I cross out the halfdays every morning and midday, though before I only used to do that sometimes. But they all say it won't keep so cold ; and the canteen-steward, Bartusch, who is sixty-two, says he has never known it so cold all his life. He has brought into our room birds which had dropped down dead from the sky. We haven't got to go walking about in the court any more during our play hour ; only whoever wants to ; then we run about for ten minutes and go back quickly to the room. It is forty degrees below zero Fahrenheit : that is a great deal, as much as in Siberia ; and there have been wolves about only ten miles from here.

The form-rooms are shut up as they can't be kept warm any longer, and we are having lessons in our sitting-rooms ; and when Mr. Breyer comes, whom we nickname the ' Sardine-sandwich,' as his head is quite bald

with long hair at the back which he combs over to the front plastering it with pomade, his hair is always frozen quite stiff, and there are long icicles hanging in his beard. All of us have had an extra shirt and pair of drawers and extra stockings given us, and we have to wear them; and we have got our overcoats from the store-rooms, and we have to wear them indoors too; and another blanket on our beds, so we aren't at all cold, and really it is very jolly. Only it is a pity, Sendrecki major says, that it is too cold to go skating, but I don't mind as I haven't got any skates yet. Upstairs the third form and the boys with third form privileges have set up their smoking club just like King Frederick William the First, and they smoke tobacco up there as no one is supposed to know that they smoke. Some of them haven't any tobacco and they smoke bits of cane, but they say it doesn't taste so nice, and Sendrecki major says you must have lungs like his for it.

I have made you something too for a Christmas present, mother dear, but I shan't tell you what it is yet. I will only say that Sendrecki minor

has helped me a bit with it as he does such splendid fretsaw work, and Sendrecki minimus had a blue silk ribbon which he has given me and I have tied it up with it, as he says it looks better like that than if it were glued, and I think you will be able to use it for putting your gloves in. Are you pleased, mamma? But you needn't give me anything unless you have plenty of money. I shan't write to you any more, darling mamma ; when just ten more days are gone I shall be starting home. I am so glad. Give my love to Lotte Hoene and Lord and old Jette, and perhaps Dr. Kunzelmann too, but he must make you quite well again by the time I come home.

With lots of kisses from your affectionate son,

GERARD VON GODWIN,

Royal Prussian Cadet.

## TWELFTH LETTER

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

16th December, 1867.

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA,

I am so anxious, and I must write to you though I didn't mean to write to you again. But I am not anxious because I am in hospital as I am not at all ill, and I shall be quite certain to be well again when the holidays start. I am only in hospital because Captain von Wecker thinks I might be ill, but my head only burns a bit, and it is Bendling's fault. Yesterday evening I left the room to go upstairs, and as I wanted to go down again Bendling was still there, and he said in quite a friendly way: 'Wait a bit, Godwin, then we can go down together.' So I waited, as he is a third form boy and had said that, and we went together. But as we got to the wooden

partition which separates off the lavatory from the rest of the floor, he gave me a push so that I stumbled back, and he rushed out and shut the door from the outside, and turned the key and called : ' Now, Godwin, see if you can break open locks too.'

I thought he would come back, but he ran away and didn't come back, and the ' Retreat' signal for going to bed was sounded downstairs ; then I knew that no one else would come up after that, and I was so afraid and shouted quite loud, but no one heard. And I thought if Sendrecki minimus heard he would help me, and I shouted out again quite loud, but he couldn't help me just because he didn't hear. Then I got very cold and I kept walking up and down, and it got quite still and I kept thinking there was someone else walking up and down too, and I got frightened and sat on the floor and cried quietly and fell asleep.

Next morning Sendrecki minimus didn't see me and he asked where I was, and Sendrecki major who sleeps next me told

him that Bendling had said I wasn't well and had been taken to hospital in the evening, but Sendrecki minimus said it wasn't true, and that I had only gone upstairs; then he ran upstairs quickly and found me, and he called his brothers, and they carried me down as I was quite stiff with numbness, and took me straight to hospital, and I was given something warm to drink and now I am all right again. Then Captain von Wecker came and asked me whether anyone had locked me in upstairs, but I didn't dare to sneak and I stayed quiet, and he asked me again, then I said: 'I went to sleep there, sir.' Then he got angry and said: 'If that is the case, Cadet von Godwin, you have only yourself to blame if you are ill. I can't give you a nurse to look after you.' And Captain von Wecker went away and I saw that he was very angry, but all the same I daren't tell him how it happened, mamma darling. And if he takes away my Christmas leave, and I mayn't go home, I shall be so miserable; and perhaps he will do it as he doesn't know you are ill,

and that it wasn't my fault. I will write to you again to-morrow, darling mamma, to tell you whether he has taken away my leave, and, oh, my head does burn so. . . .

## THIRTEENTH LETTER

To

Mrs. Charlotte Kunzelmann  
Treptow-on-Rega.

KULM-ON-VISTULA,

20th December, 1867.

DEAR MADAM,

In accordance with the wish expressed in your telegram I directed the subsequent reports by wire about the condition of our patient, Cadet von Godwin, to your address, and it was with the deepest emotion that I had to telegraph to you this morning to say that our little patient passed peacefully away in the course of the night at half-past one. I am deeply grateful to you, my dear madam, that you have expressed your readiness to lighten my shoulders of the almost impossible task of conveying to the deeply afflicted Lady von Godwin the news of the death of her only son.

You will, I am sure, be kind enough to allow me to send the details of his illness to your address. I enclose the last unfinished letter of our little friend who is gone to his mother; it makes my burden both lighter and heavier. You will gather from it that the acute inflammation of the lungs to which Cadet von Godwin succumbed, in spite of all the skill of the doctors, and in spite of the careful attention which you may believe was devoted to the patient, was the result of a spiteful boyish trick which will be punished with the severest penalty that the regulations of our institution admit, namely, the expulsion of the culprit from the cadet-corps.

But this last letter lays on my conscience an oppressive sense of guilt from which I cannot quite free myself. I did the patient an injustice, and that in spite of the fact that I have been a cadet myself and know what extraordinary ideas of honour grow up in a boy's mind, and I ought to have known that Cadet von Godwin was not telling me the truth when he asserted that he had gone to sleep in the place where he

was found half-frozen. If the irritation and annoyance of such an unpleasant incident occurring in my company had not prejudiced my calm judgment it would have been clear to me at once that the explanation given by Cadet von Godwin was a sheer impossibility in a boy of his lively and energetic character. I was harsh to him, and his tender heart felt this harshness deeply; it will be a reproach to me all my life. A man to whom children are entrusted ought always to treat them with care and love only, for it is vouchsafed to love alone and not to mental acuteness to follow a child's soul in all the intricate windings of its thoughts and feelings. It is a comfort to me, though no exoneration, to think that I was permitted to atone for my injustice as far as was possible.

After the senior of room Four, Corporal Haniel, reported to me that the cadets had come to the conviction that Cadet Bendling had locked cadet von Godwin in from motives of revenge, I went to the hospital again to learn the truth from the latter by the use of

friendly persuasion, for Cadet Bendling persistently denied it. Cadet von Godwin was lying there delirious; but the hospital orderly drew my attention to the fact that the patient had written a letter on the day of his admission to hospital, and that it was not yet sent off, and that he seemed to attach considerable importance to its despatch as he continually reverted to it in his delirium. I found the letter, and read it with the deepest emotion, my dear madam. I could only seat myself quietly at the bedside of the patient and grasp his hand, begging God in His goodness that He would grant the little fellow some moments of consciousness, if by his inscrutable decree the light of this young life so full of the fairest promise was to be quenched before its time. My holding his hand seemed to do the feverish lad good, and to soothe him; perhaps he fancied it was the hand of his mother, of whom he spoke incessantly. Then consciousness returned, he recognised me and was startled. 'You need not be startled, dear Godwin,' I said. 'I know all now, and I know that you are not to blame.'

Then the little fellow raised himself up with an effort and said: 'But I didn't sneak, sir.' It was very hard for me to retain my composure for at that moment the boy was as dear to me as a son. I laid him back quietly and could only say: 'No, my dear boy, you did not sneak.' And his hand remained resting quietly in mine, even when he began to wander again and fancy he was at home with his dear mother. 'Are you going to light the candles now, mamma?' were his last words. No doubt he fancied it was twilight on Christmas Eve as the shadows of death closed round about him, and that the radiant glow of the Christmas candles must drive away the shadows. The firm conviction that his childish faith will find fulfilment beyond all his expectations is a comfort to me in the great grief with which I mourn for this lad. May the All-merciful God give you strength to speak words of consolation to his poor mother which may comfort her and lighten her sorrow. My wife begs that she may be allowed to prepare the last bed for the little fellow who is gone from

us. We shall take him to his resting-place on December 24th, Christmas Eve.

Allow me, my dear madam, to send my deep regards and sign myself

Yours very sincerely,

VON WECKER,

Captain and Company Commander.

## A STORY OF CADET LIFE



## A Story of Cadet Life

I WONDER whether there really are some people who are quite free from curiosity; I mean the sort of people who can walk straight past any one whom they see staring hard at some object without feeling the least temptation to stop a moment and follow the direction of his gaze so as to see what the man finds so mysterious.

Personally, if I were asked whether I could include myself in this strong-minded class I doubt whether I could honestly answer 'Yes'; anyhow there was one occasion in my life when I not only felt the temptation but actually yielded to it and did exactly what every curious person does, and it happened on a summer afternoon in the parlour of an inn in an old-fashioned town where I was practising as a young barrister in the law courts.

The parlour was on the ground floor and looked out on the market-place. From its windows one could see all over the square, which happened to be almost empty at this particular hour ; but as I have always been a lover of solitude I liked it all the better for that. There were only three of us in the room : the plump waiter who poured me out a glass of golden Muscatel from a grey, cobwebby bottle ; myself in a corner of the room with its cosy nooks, sipping the sweet-scented wine ; and lastly one more guest who had settled himself in one of the open window seats with a glass of red wine in front of him on the window-sill, and was busy smoking a cigar in a long, well-coloured meerschaum holder, puffing thick clouds of smoke from it. This man with his long grey beard, fringing his ruddy, and purple-mottled face, was an old retired colonel, a well-known character in the town, who had settled down in the peaceful place like a number of other officers on the retired list, to spend the rest of his days quietly. One used to see them towards midday in knots of twos and threes

strolling in a deliberate way through the streets, and shortly vanish in the inn where they foregathered at a round table between twelve and one for a regular military parliament. On the table stood pint bottles of sour Moselle, while over it curled a cloud of blue cigar smoke, and through the smoke harsh, hoarse voices were heard discussing the latest appointments in the Army List.

The old colonel was also an habitu   of the inn, but he only came later, in the afternoon, and not for the opening of the parliament. He was a lonely man and seldom to be seen in the company of others. His home was on the outskirts of the town on the farther side of the river, with its windows overlooking the broad, low-lying meadows which were often flooded by the stream when it overflowed its banks in spring. As I passed his house I often used to see him standing at the window gazing thoughtfully with his bloodshot and baggy eyes over the grey waste of waters beyond the dam. And there he was sitting at the window of the inn-parlour with his eyes rivetted on the market

place outside, where gusts of wind swept eddies of dust over the flat, sandy ground.

What on earth could he be looking at? The plump waiter, who found his two silent guests rather dull company, had noticed the colonel's behaviour before I had, and he stood there in the middle of the room with his hands folded behind his back under his coat tails, looking through the other window out on to the market place. So something or other must be going on out there. I got up from my place as quietly as possible so as not to disturb the solemn attention of the other two, but really there was nothing to see; there was not a soul on the square except in the middle under the big lamp-post, where I noticed two schoolboys standing opposite each other in a threatening attitude. Could it be this that was rivetting the attention of the old colonel? But men are really very odd; when I had once started watching I found that I could not stop before I had made sure whether the impending fight would actually take place. The two boys had just come out of afternoon school, and were still

carrying their satchels under their arms. They might have been of the same age, but one of them was a head taller : this one, the bigger of the two, a long, lanky, lean boy with an unpleasant expression on his freckled face blocked the way of the other, who was short and sturdy and had a good-tempered face with plump, rosy cheeks ; he seemed to be teasing and sneering at him, but the distance made it impossible to catch what he was saying. When this had lasted for a little while the fight started, they both dropped their satchels on the ground, and the small plump boy lowered his head as if he meant to butt his enemy in the wind and rushed at him.

‘The big fellow will soon have him in chancery,’ said the colonel, who had been watching the movements of the two combatants closely and seemed to disapprove of the tactics of the small plump youth. It would be hard to say to whom he addressed this ; apparently he muttered it to himself without saying it to either of us. His prediction soon came true. The big fellow dodged his enemy’s charge,

and in a twinkling had slipped his left arm round his opponent's neck so that his head was caught fast in a trap; he had got him, as we used to say, 'in chancery.' With his right hand he seized the clenched fist of his enemy who had been hammering away at his back, and now that he had got him prisoner completely in his power he dragged him contemptuously in triumph three times round the lamp-post.

'He's a stupid booby,' said the old colonel still soliloquising, 'he lets himself get caught like that every time.' Obviously he was discontented with the small, plump boy and could not stand the long, lean one. 'They fight every single day,' he continued, looking at the waiter as if he wanted to explain his interest in the affair.

Then he looked outside again. 'Wonder if the little fellow will turn up,' he said. He had hardly muttered this to himself when a small, slightly-built boy shot out from the town gardens adjoining the market place.

'There he is,' said the old colonel, and he

took a gulp of his red wine, and stroked his beard.

The little fellow who, as one could see at once from the likeness, was a brother of the chubby-faced boy, but looked a finer and improved edition, had rushed up; he raised his satchel with both hands and gave the long, lean boy a blow on the back that resounded right up to us. 'Splendid!' said the old colonel. The long, lean fellow kicked out like a horse at his new assailant, but the little boy dodged and in the same moment caught him a second blow, on the head this time, so that his cap flew off, but in spite of it he did not let his prisoner out of chancery and still kept tight hold of his right hand. And now the little fellow in a real frenzy of haste tore his satchel open and took out his steel penholder from the case, and suddenly started stabbing lanky-legs in the hand which was holding his brother's hand prisoner. 'The confounded scamp,' said the colonel to himself, 'splendid fellow!' and his bloodshot eyes shone with delight.

The whole business was now becoming rather too much for lanky-legs, and furious with pain he let go of his first adversary so as to dash wildly on the little fellow. But the latter changed into a regular little wild cat : his cap was off, and his curly hair clung closely to his delicate little face which was as pale as death, and his eyes glowed like fire ; his satchel and its contents lay on the ground, and dashing over cap and satchel alike he charged at lanky-legs, closing in on him and hammering away with his small, clenched fists at his wind and body so fiercely that he began to give way step by step. But by this chubby-cheeks had recovered himself, and had seized his satchel and returned to the attack with volleys of blows on the enemy's back and sides. The tall, lean fellow at last shook off the little boy and stepped back a couple of paces and took up his cap. The fight was now coming to its end.

The three faced each other breathless and panting. Lanky-legs grinned horribly to try to hide the disgrace of his defeat ; the little

fellow, still clenching his fists, watched every movement with blazing eyes, ready in a twinkling to dash at him again in case he had to begin it afresh. But lanky-legs did not return to the attack, he had had enough ; sneering and shrugging his shoulders he kept drawing back, and when he had got to a distance he started abusing them.

The two brothers then collected the belongings of the little fellow that were lying scattered all about, put them in the satchel, took up their caps and knocked the dust out of them, and turned to go home. Their way home brought them past the windows of the inn-parlour, and I could now look at the plucky little fellow more closely ; he really was a thoroughbred.

Lanky-legs now began to follow them, shouting out loudly after them across the market place ; the small boy shrugged his shoulders and said with unutterable contempt : 'What a funky, long-legged lout!' and suddenly he stopped short and turned his face to the foe. In a twinkling lanky-legs stopped short too,

and the two brothers burst into a shout of mocking laughter. They were now standing just under the window where the old colonel was sitting, and he leaned out and said : ' Splendid, my boy ! you're a capital fellow ; there, take a drink,' and he held out his glass to the little boy from the window. The boy looked up in surprise and whispered to his elder brother, then he gave him his satchel to hold and took the large glass in his two small hands. After a good drink he held the glass by the stem in one hand, took his satchel from his brother, and without troubling to ask permission passed the glass on to him, and chubby-cheeks took a pull too.

' The young rascal !' said the old colonel chuckling to himself, ' I give him my glass, and without any more ado he lets his cher frère take a drink too.' But one could see from the little fellow's face as he handed the glass up to the window again that he had only done what seemed quite natural to him.

' Taste good ?' the old colonel asked. ' Yes, very, thank you,' the boy replied, bowing and

taking off his cap ; then the two continued their way home together. The colonel's gaze followed them till they turned round the street corner and vanished from his sight, then returning to his soliloquy he said : ' It's often a strange business with boys like that.'

' To think of their actually fighting in the open street,' said the fat waiter disapprovingly as he still stood there. ' It's surprising the masters allow such goings-on, and it looks too as if they were of respectable families.'

' That doesn't matter a jot,' the old colonel grunted ; ' lads must be allowed some freedom, they can't always be tied to their master's apron-strings ; lads must fight.' He rose from his seat and the chair creaked under him, then he knocked the cigar end from his holder into the ash-tray, and still speaking his thoughts aloud walked stiffly over to the wall where his hat hung on a nail. ' With lads like that nature's bound to come out, one sees the real thing ; later on, when they grow older, they all seem just alike. Lads like that are worth studying.'

The waiter gave him his hat, and the colonel took up his glass again, which still contained a few drops of red wine. 'The confounded rascals have drunk it all up for me,' he growled, and he looked almost melancholy as he gazed at the scanty dregs, then he put the glass down again without emptying it.

The fat waiter suddenly came to life again. 'Perhaps the colonel will have another bottle,' he suggested. The old man stood by the table and had opened the wine-list muttering to himself, 'hm, another sort perhaps; but one can't get that in glasses, only in bottles; rather too much.' His eyes wandered slowly over towards me, and I could read in his look the silent question of a man to his neighbour whether he will help him to manage a bottle of wine. 'If I may be permitted I shall be only too glad to share a bottle,' I said. I was permitted, and evidently rather gladly. The colonel pushed the wine-list over to the waiter and placed his finger under a brand, saying in authoritative tones, 'A bottle of that. It is a brand I know,' he said, as he turned to me and

threw his hat on the table, 'a fine old strain.'

I had taken my seat by his side at the table so that I could see his face in profile. His eyes were turned towards the window, and as he gazed out past me to the sky the red glow of the sunset was reflected in them. It was the first time I had seen him so close.

There was a lost, dreamy look in his eyes, and his hand ran through his long, grey beard mechanically as though out of the tide of years that had streamed past him figures were emerging, figures which had been young when he was young and were now—who could say where? The bottle brought us by the waiter and placed before us on the table contained a delicious wine; it was an old claret, quite tawny and oily, that poured into our glasses, and I repeated the expression of the old colonel. 'I must admit, sir, it really is a fine old strain.'

His bloodshot eyes lost their far away look, and he rolled them across and fixed them on me as though he meant: 'What do you know about it?' He took a deep drink, wiped his

moistened moustache, and gazed over his glass : 'Strange, when one grows old one's thoughts go back to the earliest days far more than to recent years.' I kept quiet, for I felt that I was not expected to speak or ask any questions ; when a man ransacks the depths of his memory he becomes poetical, and no one ought to ask poets questions. A long silence followed.

'What strange sorts of people one gets to know,' he continued, 'when one thinks of it ; numbers of them just live and live, often it would be better if they did not, and others who have had to go, far too soon ; many a one lies under there,' and he passed the palm of his hand slowly over the top of the table. It looked as if he fancied the table-top was the earth's surface and was thinking of those who lay beneath the earth.

'Couldn't help thinking that just now,' and his voice sounded dull and mournful, 'as I looked at the lad. What a lad too ! Nature will out, simply spirts out in a stream as thick as your arm. Then you see right into the strain. Pity though, the fine old strain is

easily destroyed and lost, easier than the other sort. Once I knew a lad just like him.'

Ah! so that was it.

The waiter had settled himself down in a corner in the back of the room. I kept perfectly quiet, and the slow halting utterance of the old colonel sounded in the stillness of the room like the gusts of wind which precede a storm or some great disturbance of the elements. Again his eyes rolled over towards me as though to search me and test whether I was worthy to hear his story. He asked no question and I said nothing, but I looked at him and my eyes meant to reply: 'Tell me.' But he did not begin at once; first he drew a big cigar-case of stiff brown leather very deliberately from the breast-pocket of his coat, and he took a cigar out and lit it slowly.

'Know Berlin, I suppose?' he said, as he extinguished the match and blew the first cloud of smoke across the table. 'You'll have been on the tram there too?'

'Oh yes, often.'

'Hm, well, as you go from Alexander Square

towards Jannowitz Bridge along behind the new Friedrichstreet, on the right in the new Friedrichstreet stands a huge old barrack like a box, that is the old Cadet College.' I nodded assent.

'The new one over yonder in Lichterfelde I don't know, but the old one, ah! I know it well; that's to say I was once a cadet there in its time. I know it well'. The repetition of his words made me feel that perhaps he knew a great deal that had happened in the College as well as the College itself.

'As you come from Alexander Square,' he continued, 'first there is a courtyard with trees; it's overgrown with grass now, wasn't in my time for we drilled there, and the cadets strolled about in it during the break. Then comes the main central building enclosing a four-cornered court that we called the 'Quad,' and the cadets used it as well for strolling about in; you can't see into it from outside as you drive past.'

I nodded again.

'And then comes a third court rather smaller with a house in it; don't know what it's used

for now, it was the hospital then. 'You can still see the roof of the gymnasium as you go past; the principal drilling-ground was near the hospital. There was a trench to practise jumping, and climbing-apparatus and all sorts of paraphernalia; it's all gone now. From the hospital one door led out on to the drilling-ground, but it was always kept locked. If you wanted to go into the hospital you had to go in in front across the court; this door was, as I said, always kept locked—I mean, it was only opened in special circumstances, and then it was always a very bad business: in other words, behind the door was the mortuary, and when a cadet died he was laid there, and the door was kept open till the other cadets had been marched past him to see him for the last time, and he was carried out, hm.'

A long silence followed.

At last the old colonel continued in rather depreciatory tones: 'Of the new College out there in Lichterfelde, as I said, I know nothing at all, but I have heard that it's a big concern now with a heap of cadets. There in the

Friedrichstreet we hadn't very many, only four companies, and they were divided into two forms—the first and the second, and besides these there were the "Specials" who entered the army afterwards as officers; they were nicknamed "Bosses" because they superintended the rest, and so we couldn't bear them. Well, in my company, that's to say the fourth, there were two brothers who were in the second form with me; their names have nothing to do with the story, but—well, they were called von L. Among the authorities the elder was known as L. major, and the smaller who was a year and a half younger than his brother as L. minor, but we cadets always called them big L. and little L. Little L.—ah!'

He moved in his chair, and his eyes gazed far away into the distance. It looked as if he had really got to the main point of his reminiscences.

'Anything so different in two brothers I have really never seen again,' he went on, blowing a great cloud of cigar smoke from his

holder. 'Big L. was a square-built fellow with clumsy limbs and a bullet head ; little L. was like a willow, he was so slender and springy. He had a small, finely cut head with fair, wavy hair, naturally curly, and a nose like a young eagle, and altogether—ah, he was a boy!' The old colonel drew a deep breath. 'Now, you mustn't think that that kind of thing made no difference to the cadets, just the opposite ; the two brothers had hardly come from the preparatory school, I believe they came from Wahlstatt and settled in the Cadet College at Berlin before the matter had decided itself ; big L. was left to take care of himself, and little L. was a general favourite. Among lads like that, it's a curious thing, the big, strong fellows they are the rulers, and it's all right for anyone they look on with favour ; he's respected by the rest, and no one ventures lightly to touch him. Lads like that—nature will out ! It's pretty nearly the same as with animals, they all crouch before the biggest and strongest,' and fresh puffs from the cigar-holder accompanied the words.

' When the cadets came out in the break the chums always got together, and walked arm in arm about the Quad and on to the court with the trees, backwards and forwards till the drum went for school again. Now big L. always tacked himself on just where he could and slouched gloomily along, but little L. had hardly got down into the court before he was carried off arm in arm with two or three big fellows, and had to walk about with them; and they were boys in the first form. Generally, such a thing never occurred to a first form boy as to go about with 'a nipper' in the second, who was far beneath their dignity; but it was rather different with little L. and an exception was made in his case, and in spite of it he was just as popular with the second form as he was with the first. You could see that in school where we second form boys were by ourselves. In school we sat in alphabetical order, so the two L.'s sat next each other pretty nearly in the middle. They were about equally good in work: big L. had a good head for mathematics—he wasn't up to much in other

subjects, but for mathematics he was, as we used to say, a regular 'whale;' and little L., who wasn't exactly strong in arithmetic, used to copy from his brother, but in everything else he was head and shoulders above his brother—in fact one of the best in the form. And there was a difference there as well in the two brothers: big L. kept his knowledge to himself and never prompted, while little L. was always prompting, simply roared it out, well, well, and an affectionate smile spread over the old man's face.

'If any one in the front row was called up and couldn't answer little L. bubbled and spouted out what he had to say over all the desks in front; if it was any one's turn on the back seat little L. answered half under his breath. Now there was an old professor who taught us Latin; once in almost every lesson he stood still in the middle of the form and said: "L. minor, you are prompting again and in an absolutely barefaced way. Take care, L. minor, next time I will make an example of you. I shall not speak to you again to-day,"'

and the old colonel laughed to himself. 'However, each time was always the last but one and he never made an example of him, for although little L. was not a model boy—in fact he was rather the opposite—still he was a favourite with the masters and officers as well, and it could hardly be otherwise. He was always merry, just as if he had got a present given him every day, though as a matter of fact he never did, for their father was a major in some infantry regiment or other—quite badly off—and the two boys scarcely ever got a penny pocketmoney, and yet he was always spick and span as if he had come straight out of a band-box, in fact—' the colonel paused, and he seemed to be searching for an expression to sum up his whole love for his quondam little comrade, 'as though nature had been in a really good temper and had set the lad on his legs and said : "There he is for you."'

'Now it was surprising,' he went on, 'how closely the two brothers clung together considering they were so different; you didn't notice it so much in big L. he was always sulky

and never showed his feelings, but little L. couldn't hide anything, and just because he knew how much better he was treated by the other cadets than his brother, he was sorry for him. When they were strolling about in the courtyard you could see how from time to time he glanced at his brother to see whether he had anyone to walk with. It goes without saying that he prompted his brother in form and let him copy from him when extempore essays were being dictated, but he also took care that no one did anything to annoy his brother; and when he looked at his brother sideways, as he often did without the big fellow noticing it, his little face often became quite extraordinarily serious, almost as if he felt anxious about his brother—' and the old man puffed harder at his cigar and went on: 'I put that altogether afterwards when everything happened as it had to; he must have known big L.'s character better than we did, and what peculiarities his brother had. Naturally the cadets saw all this, and though it didn't do big L. any good, for he remained as unpopular as ever, it made little L.

all the more popular, and everyone nicknamed him "brotherly love." The two brothers shared a room, and little L. was, as I said, very spick and span ; big L. was just the opposite, so little L. turned absolutely into a servant and actually polished up the buttons on his uniform, and before falling in when the call for parade sounded he used to place himself in front of him once more with the clothes brush in his hand and brushed and simply scrubbed him, especially on the days when the "waxy" lieutenant was on duty and took the parade. Now the cadets had to come down to the courtyard in the morning for the parade, and then the officer on duty passed between the ranks and saw whether their uniforms were all right ; and when the "waxy" lieutenant was in charge of the parade, a regular scare reigned every time in the whole company as he always found something wrong. He used to go behind the cadets and flicked their tunics with his fingers to see whether any dust came out, and if none did then he lifted their coat tail pockets and flipped them, and you could beat out your coat as much as you

liked but some dust always remained after it all, and as soon as the "waxy" lieutenant saw it he bleated out like an old goat : "Put his name down to report himself on Sunday," and then it was all up with Sunday furlough, and that was a sad business.' The old colonel paused again and took a vigorous pull at the wine, and with his hand twisted his moustache into his mouth to suck off the drops which glittered on its hairs. Evidently the recollection of the 'waxy' lieutenant made him savage.

'If one only thinks,' he growled, 'what a mean nature it takes to prevent a poor lad, who has looked forward the whole week to being allowed to go out on Sunday, from getting leave just for a mere trifle. Well, when I have noticed anyone do people a shabby trick—it never happened in my regiment later, they knew well enough that I was there and would not put up with it : be a bit rough tongued, that's all right under certain circumstances ; pack them off into arrest, that doesn't do any harm ; but do shabby tricks, it takes a mean fellow to do that.'

'Quite true,' cried the waiter from the back

of the room, thereby informing us that he had been following the colonel's story.

The old man calmed down and proceeded with his story, 'Well, that all went on in this way for about a year until the time when the examinations were held, and that was always a special time. The first form sat for their subaltern's examination, and the "Special" form whom we nicknamed the "Bosses," as I said, sat for their officer's certificate, and as soon as they had finished the examination they were sent off home out of the Cadet College with the result that for a bit there was only the second form there, which was now moved up to the first form. This lasted till the new second form came in from the preparatory schools, and we had the new "Bosses," again, and then the whole show trundled on in the old way. But in the interval regular confusion reigned when the last of the first form left, for they were examined by divisions and then packed off, and after that everything went pretty topsy-turvy.

'Now in the room shared by the two

brothers there was a first form boy,' rather a swell, as we cadets used to say. He had taken it into his head to turn out a very smart fellow as soon as he had finished his examination and was allowed out free, so instead of the regulation sword-belt which we cadets got supplied us by the College and wore, he had had a special sword-belt of his own made of patent leather; it was neater, and looked smarter than the ordinary regulation belt. And he could afford to do that sort of thing as he got money sent him from home.

'Well, he had shown off this belt to every body for he was vilely proud of it and we other cadets had admired it. Now when the day came for the first form boys to pack up their belongings to go home he wanted to buckle on his smart sword-belt, and all at once the thing wasn't to be found. A regular hulla-balloo ensued; every corner was ransacked, but the belt was nowhere to be found. The fellow had not put it away in his locker but had placed it with his helmet in his bedroom where the cadets' helmets stood, behind a curtain not

locked up, and it had disappeared. No alternative was possible, some one must have taken it. But who? At first suspicion fell upon the old college-porter who cleaned the cadets' boots and tidied up the bedrooms, but he was an old ex-sergeant who had never been guilty of the slightest piece of dishonesty all his life. It surely could not possibly be one of the cadets; who could even think of such a thing? So the affair remained a secret, and a nasty one to be sure. The first form boy cursed and railed because he would have to go off with a regulation sword-belt after all; the rest of the cadets in the room were quite silent and depressed, all of them had at once opened their lockers and demanded that the first form boy should examine them, but he had only replied: "Rubbish! who thinks of such a thing?"

'And now something remarkable happened which caused still more excitement than any of the previous events: all of a sudden the first form boy had his sword-belt back again. He had already left the room carrying his

portmanteau when, while still on the staircase, he was suddenly called to from behind, and as he turned round little L. came running after him with something in his hand, and that was the boy's sword-belt.

'Some other cadets happened to be passing, and they told us afterwards that little L. was as pale as death, and his limbs and body were simply trembling all over. He whispered something to the elder boy and they exchanged a few words very quietly, then the big fellow patted his head, undid his regulation belt, buckled on his smart one and went off, giving little L. the regulation belt to take back. Now, naturally the affair couldn't remain a secret any longer and it all leaked out.

'A fresh rearrangement of the rooms had been ordered and big L. had been transferred, and he had moved to his new quarters exactly as all this trouble was happening. It struck the cadets afterwards that he had kept remarkably quiet during it, but one sees that often enough ; when once the grass has grown, everyone has heard it grow ; but this much

was true, he had let no one help him, and when little L. began to lend a hand he had been quite rough to his small brother. But little L., ready to help as he naturally was, was not easily discouraged ; and as he took his brother's canvas gymnasium coat down from the locker, where it lay very carefully folded, all at once he felt something hard inside, and that something was the missing sword-belt.

' No one ever knew what the brothers said to each other at the time, or even whether they said anything at all, for little L. had still enough presence of mind to leave the room without a word, but he had hardly got outside the door and into the corridor before he hurled the coat on the floor, and without thinking what the result would be ran after the proper owner with the belt.

' Naturally there was no help for it now, the story was all round the company in five minutes. Big L. had let the devil get hold of him, and had joined the band of light-fingered gentry.

' Half an hour later the word was passed

quietly from room to room: "this evening after lights-out everyone to come to a meeting in the common-room." You see, in the quarters of each company there was a large room called the common-room, where form-reports were given out and other official ceremonies took place.

'So in the evening after lights-out, when all was dark, the cadets came quietly from their rooms along the corridor; not a single door was allowed to bang and every one came in their stockings, for the captain and officers knew nothing about it, and we daren't let them know anything of the meeting or we should have brought down a regular storm on our heads.

'As we reached the common-room door, close to the door by the wall stood little L., with his face as white as the plaster on the wall. Some of us at once seized him by the hand crying: "Little L. can come in too, it's not his fault at all." Only one out of us all objected, a tall, big lout called—well, his name's got nothing to do with the story, so I'll call him K. But he was outvoted at once, and little L. was brought

in with the rest of us. A few tallow candles were lighted and placed on the table, and then the discussion started in full swing.'

The colonel's glass was empty so I filled it up, and he took a long pull: 'You can laugh at it all now,' he proceeded, 'if you like, but I can tell you this much: we didn't feel at all like laughing, but thoroughly uncanny. A cadet, a petty thief! The very idea was ghastly. Everyone was quite pale, and no one spoke above a whisper. Usually it was considered an abominably dirty trick for a cadet to report a comrade to the authorities, but if anyone did this sort of thing and stole, well, we didn't count him a cadet any longer, and so the question was now to be discussed whether we should report big L's conduct to the captain.

'Long-legged K. was the first to speak; he declared we ought most decidedly to go to the captain and tell him all that had happened, for no consideration ought to be shown when such a dirty trick had been played. K. was now the biggest and strongest in the company, so his words made a great impression, and at heart the

rest of us were of the same opinion. So no one knew quite what to answer, and a general silence followed. But at that moment the circle round the table was broken, and little L., who had kept cowering down in the furthest corner of the room till now, entered the ring. His arms hung limply by his side, and his face was cast down; you could see that he wanted to say something but couldn't pluck up courage to do so.

'Long-legged K. began to talk big again and said: "L. minor has no right to speak in this business." But this time luck was against him; he had always borne the two brothers a grudge, no one knew exactly why, but especially against little L. Besides he was not at all popular, for, as somehow or other lads like us cadets do have an extraordinarily fine instinct, we could feel that there was a thoroughly mean, cowardly and petty spirit lurking in the great lout. He was just one of the sort that never venture to attack fellows of their own size, but always choose the smaller and weaker to bully.

'So a general whispering broke out all round:

"Little L. shall speak. Yes, he certainly shall speak!"

'As the boy who was still standing rigidly there heard how his comrades stood up for him, all at once big tears trickled down his cheeks, and he clenched his hands and pressed them to his eyes, and sobbed so frightfully that his whole frame shook from head to foot and he couldn't utter a word. One of us went up to him and patted him on the back saying: "Calm yourself. What do you want to say?" But little L. went on sobbing; at last he brought out in big jerks: "If he is reported—he'll be chucked out of the corps—and then what will become of him?"

'We all remained speechless. We knew the little fellow was quite right, and that that would be the result if we reported him; and besides we knew his father was badly off, and each of us thought involuntarily of what his own father would say if he heard of anything like that about his son.

"Still, you must see for yourself," the cadet continued to little L., "that your brother has done a really dirty thing and deserves to be

punished for it." Little L. nodded mutely ; his own convictions were quite on the side of his brother's accusers. The cadet reflected a moment, then he turned to the rest of us and said, "I will make a proposal : if we needn't we won't ruin L. major's whole life. We'll try and see whether he still has any decent feelings left. L. major shall choose for himself whether he will be reported, or leave the matter to us to give him a good licking and then bury the whole affair."

" 'That's a splendid way out of it,' all cried eagerly.

'The cadet laid his hand on little L.'s shoulder and said : "Go and call your brother here then."

'Little L. dried his eyes and nodded hastily, and was out of the door and back again with his brother in a twinkling.

'Big L. did not dare to look anyone in the face ; he stood there in front of his companions like a great ox that had been hit on the head, and his little brother stood behind never turning his eyes from him.

'The cadet that had just made the proposal

began the cross-examination of L. major : " Did he admit that he had taken the sword-belt ! "

" Yes, he admitted it. "

' " Did he feel that he had done a thing that had really made him unworthy to be a cadet any longer ? " " Yes, he did. "

' " Would he rather be reported to the captain, or well licked by us and then have the whole matter dropped ? " " He would rather take the licking. " A sigh of relief went round the whole room, and it was decided to set the business at once on the spot. One of the cadets was sent to fetch a cane like the ones we used to dust our clothes with. While he was gone we tried to persuade little L. to leave the room so as not to be present at the execution of the sentence, but he shook his head silently and wanted to remain.

' As soon as the cane was brought big L. had to place himself on the table face downwards, while two cadets held his hands and pulled him forward, and two others took him by the feet so that his body was stretched out. The tallow-candles were moved from the table and held

high up, and the whole show looked just awful.

‘Big K. was tō carry out the sentence as he was the strongest; he grasped the cane, stepped to one side, and brought it whistling down with all his strength on big L., who had only his gymnasium coat and and trousers on. He simply writhed under the fearful stroke and was going to scream out, but in a twinkling little L. sprang to him and seized his head in his hands and pressed it to his breast. “Don’t scream,” he whispered, “or the whole thing will come out.” Big L. swallowed his cries and gulped and groaned to himself. When K. lifted the cane again a second blow rang through the room. The unfortunate victim’s body was so convulsed that the cadets could scarcely hold on to his hands and feet. Little L. had thrown both his arms round his brother’s head and pressed it spasmodically to his breast. His eyes were staring wide open, and his face was as white as the plaster on the wall, while his whole frame simply shook.

‘The whole room was as still as death ; the only sounds to be heard were the choking sobs of the culprit, half-stifled on his little brother’s breast. Every eye was fixed on little L., and we all felt that we couldn’t look on any longer. So when the third blow fell, and the whole scene was repeated again, an excited whisper rose all round : “That’ll do. No more.”

Long-legged K. was quite red with his exertions and wanted to go on with a fourth stroke, but all at once three or four cadets flung themselves between him and big L., and snatched the cane from his hand and shoved him back. Big L. was set free. He got up slowly, and then stood by the table in a regular collapse with little L. by his side.

‘That was the end of the punishment.

‘The same cadet again began to speak, but still in a whisper : “The business is done with now and is to be buried ; everyone will shake hands with L. major, and anyone who says another word about the affair is a cad.” A general “Yes” showed that he voiced the

feelings of the rest. We went up to big L. and shook his hand, and then as if on a word of command we all rushed to little L., and there was a regular mob round him, one and all wanting to seize his hand and shake it. The cadets behind stretched their hands over those in front, some scrambled on the table to get at him; they stroked his head and patted his back and shoulders, and there was a general whisper: "Little L., you splendid little chap, you ripping little fellow."

The old colonel raised his glass to his lips as though he wanted to swallow a lump in his throat. As he set it down again he growled out in a deep voice: 'Lads like that, they have instinct, instinct and feelings.' Then the lights were blown out and we all hurried back stealthily to our rooms, and in five minutes we were all in bed and the whole thing was over. The captain and other officers hadn't heard a sound of the whole affair. The whole thing was over.' The speaker's voice sounded very grave; both his hands were buried in his trouser-pockets, and his eyes gazed straight in

front of him through the thick smoke of his cigar. 'That's what we all thought that evening when we went to bed. Did little L. sleep at all that night? Next day in school it looked as if he hadn't. Up to now it had always seemed as if there were a mischievous imp sitting in little L's. seat, and he had let his voice be heard above the whole form, and now it was exactly as if there was an empty gap he sat there so still and pale. Just as when one wipes the powder from a butterfly's wings, that's how it was with the little fellow, and I can't describe it any other way.

'In the afternoons now he was always to be seen walking with his brother; perhaps he felt that now more than ever big L. would not find a chance of joining on to the others, and so it was for that reason that he kept him company. And they used to walk there arm-in-arm round the Quad and up and down the courtyard with the trees, both with their eyes on the ground, and hardly ever to be seen speaking.'

Again there was a pause in the story, again I had to fill up the colonel's empty glass, and

again the cigar puffed away thicker than ever.

‘But perhaps,’ he went on, ‘all that would have passed over and everything would have been the same again in course of time, but human nature, ah!’ He clenched his fist on the table and continued in a growl: ‘There are some people who are just like ‘poisonous weeds in a field, and the wretched animals eat them to their own destruction: men, like these, poison the rest.

‘Well, one day we were doing chemistry: the master was showing us experiments on the electric battery, and an electric shock was to be sent through the whole form. So each of us had to hold the hand of the boy next him to complete the circuit. Well, as big L., who was standing next to the lanky K., held out his hand to him, the cad pulled a face as if he was going to catch hold of a toad, and drew back his hand. Big L. shrank back speechless, and sat there blushing fiery red. But in a twinkling little L. sprang from his seat to the other side of his brother and placed himself between him and

the lanky K., and seizing the latter's hand knocked it down on to the desk with all his might so that the long-legged bully screamed aloud with pain. Then he gripped the little fellow by the neck, and the two bade fair to give each other a regular hiding in the middle of the lesson.

'The master, who had been fussing about the whole time with his electric machine, now came up with his coat tails flying and cried: "Now, now." He was an oldish man, and we hadn't exactly much respect for him. Tho two were locked together so closely that they did not leave go though the master was standing just in front of them.

"What disgraceful behaviour!" he cried, "what disgraceful behaviour! Let go at once."

'Long-legged K. made a face as if he was on the point of howling out loud. "L. minor started it," he cried, "though I hadn't touched him." Little L. stood bolt upright—we always had to stand up if the master spoke to us—and great drops of sweat trickled slowly down from

his temples. He didn't say a word; he had set his teeth so close together that you could see the tensely drawn muscles of the jaw through his delicate cheeks, and as he heard what long-legged K. said, a smile passed over his face, a smile such as I have never seen before.

'The old master expatiated for quite a while in beautifully rounded periods on the unparalleled misbehaviour, and spoke of the depths of instinctive barbarity to which such conduct pointed. We let him go on—our thoughts were with little L. and the lanky K.

'Hardly had the lesson come to an end and the master got outside the door when a book came flying over the heads of the whole form from the back of the room straight at K.'s head. And as he turned on his assailant, furious with passion, he got another book on the other side of his head, and a general cry rose: "Down him, down him!" The whole form sprang to their feet and dashed over the tables and desks at long-legged K., and the cad's hide was simply tanned to a pulp; and the old colonel gave a grim laugh of quiet

satisfaction as he contemplated his fist resting still clenched on the table.

‘I helped too, and with a vengeance,’ he said.

It seemed as if his hand had really forgotten that it was now fifty years older. One could see from the convulsive clenching of the fingers that in spirit they were once again giving long-legged K. a sound drubbing. ‘But as is the way with people of that sort,’ he continued, ‘naturally this fellow was a revengeful, spiteful, malicious cur. He would have liked best of all to go to the captain and sneak about it all afterwards, but he didn’t dare to do that from fear of us, he was too cowardly for that. Still, he had had a licking from the whole form, and little L. was to blame for that, and he never forgot his grudge against little L. for it.

‘Well, one afternoon during the break the cadets were strolling about the courtyards, and the two brothers as always by themselves, and long-legged K. arm in arm with two others.

‘To get from the Quad to the other court

with the trees you had to go through an archway which passed under one wing of the main building; and there was a rule that cadets should not pass through arm in arm so that communication should not be blocked.

‘On this afternoon, as bad luck would have it, K. met the two brothers in the archway as he wanted to pass from the Quad to the other court with his two companions, and the two brothers, lost in thought, had forgotten to let go of each other’s arms.

‘Long-legged K., though the business had nothing to do with him, stood stockstill when he saw it, opened his eyes wide and his jaws still wider, and called to them: “What’s the meaning of this, your going through here arm in arm? Are you going to block the way for honest folk, you pack of thieves?”’ The colonel stopped. ‘It was fifty years ago,’ he said, ‘and more, but I remember it as if it happened yesterday. I happened to be walking just then round the Quad with two other cadets, and suddenly we heard a scream from the archway: I can’t describe how it rang. I

suppose you would hear something of the kind when a tiger or wild beast bursts out of its cage and springs on a man. It was so ghastly that all three of us dropped our arms and stood there petrified, and not only ourselves but every one who was in the Quad, and there was an absolute silence at once. Then everything with two legs made for the archway at top speed, and cadets came from the other court too, so that both the entrances were black with us all swarming in. Naturally I was in the thick of it, and what a sight met my eyes! Little L. had clambered right up on to lanky K. just like a wild cat: there's no other way to describe it. He had fastened on to his collar with his left hand so that the big lout was nearly strangled, his right fist going crash, crash, crash into the middle of his face, and landing so heavily that the blood was streaming in torrents from his nose.

'And now the officer on duty came up from the other court and forced his way through the crowd of cadets. "L. minor, let go at once," he thundered. He was a strapping great man, with a voice you could hear from one end of

the College to the other, and we had the deuce's own respect for him.

' But little L. neither heard nor saw anything, but went on hammering away at K.'s face with a series of awful, shrill shrieks that went through our very marrow. As the officer saw it he plunged in too and seized the little fellow by the shoulders, and tore him by sheer force away from K. But as soon as he stood on his feet little L.'s eyes rolled wildly in his head, and he fell full length on the ground in convulsions.

' We had never seen anything of the kind and stood there looking in sheer amazement and terror, but the officer bent over him, then he stood up and said: "The boy is in the most frightful fit." Then he lifted him up by the shoulders and cried: "Two of you take him by the feet over to the hospital; quick march!" And so they carried off poor little L. to the hospital. As they took him away we went up to big L. to find out exactly what had happened, and from him and the two cadets who had been walking with K. we heard the whole business.

‘Long-legged K. stood there like a whipped cur wiping the blood from his nose, and if he hadn’t been in such a plight nothing would have saved him from getting a second licking within an inch of his life. As it was, we all turned our backs on him and no one spoke another word to him ; he had shown himself a cad.’

The table resounded under the blows from the old colonel’s fist, and he resumed : ‘ I don’t know how long the rest kept him in Coventry ; I was a whole year longer in the form with him and I never spoke another word to him. We entered the army together as subalterns ; I never said good-bye to him or shook his hand. I don’t know whether he became an officer, and I’ve never looked out his name in the Army List ; I don’t know whether he has fallen in one of our wars, or whether he’s alive or dead ; as far as I was concerned he didn’t exist, and doesn’t exist any longer. The only thing I am sorry about is that the fellow ever crossed my path, and that I cannot root out all recollection of him like a weed that one throws into the fire.

‘Next morning bad news came from the hospital : little L. lay unconscious with a serious attack of brain-fever, and in the afternoon his brother was sent for, but the little fellow did not recognise him. That evening, as we were having supper in the big dining-hall, a rumour spread passing through the hall like the noiseless flight of a great, black-winged bird that little L. was dead, and as we came back to our company quarters after supper our captain was standing at the door of the common room ; we had to go in, and then he told us that our little comrade had fallen asleep that evening and would never wake again.

‘The captain was a really good man—he fell like a hero in 1866—and he was very fond of his cadets ; as he communicated the news to us he had to wipe away the tears that trickled into his moustache. Then he ordered us to fold our hands, and one of us had to stand out and repeat the Lord’s Prayer aloud before us all.’ The colonel bowed his head and said : ‘That was the first time I felt how beautiful the Lord’s Prayer really is. Well, the next

day, in the afternoon, the door leading from the hospital to the drilling ground, that cursed, fatal door was opened. We had to go to the hospital courtyard, and were to see our dead companion once more. Our footsteps resounded as we tramped past ; no one said a word ; only deep drawn breaths were to be heard, and then little L., poor little L. ! He lay there in his little white night shirt with his hands folded on his breast and his fair hair curling round his forehead, which was white as wax, with the cheeks so sunken that his pretty, saucy little nose stood out, and on his face the expression—' Again the old colonel paused and drew his breath in deep gasps, then he went on in a faltering voice : ' I am an old man now and I have seen men lying on the battlefield with misery and despair written on their faces, but such a heart-broken expression as was stamped on the face of this child I have never seen again, never.'

Absolute silence reigned in the room where we were sitting. As the old colonel was silent and said no more the waiter got up quietly

from his corner and lighted the gas above our heads, for it had grown quite dark.

I lifted the bottle again, but it was nearly empty ; only a drop came out, a last drop of the fine, old strain.

THE END



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LX. e. 48  
Prussian Coolest

e. L. 1900 3/5/59 25/6/12

